



Apr 20, 2026

Dear Chair Westman and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation,

The Transportation for Vermonters Coalition (T4VT), on behalf of Vermonters across the state, writes to you regarding the urgent funding crisis facing public transit in Vermont.

We sincerely appreciate the Committee's work to improve programs, provide funding, and collect information that will collectively support a healthier, better connected Vermont.

We also recognize that this letter comes to you late in the session, and that transit is just one of many pressing challenges before the Committee - from maintaining roads and bridges to supporting safety, resilience and economic development. But transit is foundational infrastructure with outsized impacts, and without action, its instability will continue to create ripple effects across these other priorities.

The Transportation for Vermonters Coalition urges the Committee to approve an additional \$500,000 dollars for Green Mountain Transit and \$1.5 million for rural transit providers in order to prevent the worst case scenario as transit across the state faces an increasingly dire budget crisis.

Public Transit Benefits Us All

Transportation is one of the top household expenses for Vermonters, often second only to housing; the average Vermont household pays roughly \$17,000 per year for transportation costs. For many working families, transit is the most affordable way to get around - particularly as the price of gasoline is surging at the pump. This is part of the reason why public transit provides a 5-1 economic return for every dollar spent - supporting businesses, workforce access, and healthier communities.

And the need for transit is only growing. Vermont is now the second-oldest state in the nation, with nearly 30% of residents [age 60 or older](#). Many older Vermonters no longer drive, and thousands rely on public transit every year to maintain independence. At the same time, transit is essential for the workforce that supports them—particularly caregivers who rely on consistent, affordable transportation to get to work.

As Vermont works to grow its housing stock, investments in public transit play a crucial role in supporting compact, cost-effective development patterns that reduce dependence on cars, lower Vermonters' transportation costs and cut climate pollution. Without a stable transit system,

we risk creating a bottleneck: more people, more homes, and no viable way to move around without a car.

That is why it is essential that the FY27 T-bill includes funding that, at a minimum, prevents further reduction in transit service across the state.

A notable example is Green Mountain Transit (GMT), Vermont's largest public transit provider, which is looking at its largest fiscal deficit to date: \$3 million in FY28. This is not due to mismanagement, but various external factors including a long-term decline in state funding (from 26% in 2012 to just 12% today) alongside skyrocketing service costs. GMT has already cut about 20% of its service since 2024, and further cuts could take effect as early as this year.

Cuts of this magnitude can trigger a "death spiral" - reduced service leads to fewer riders, which leads to less federal funding, which leads to further service cuts.

If the legislature does not act, Vermonters will feel it where it matters most: fewer employees for local businesses, harder trips to get to things like healthcare and groceries, slower progress on cutting climate pollution, and more traffic on already strained roads and infrastructure budgets.

We recognize that short-term fixes alone are not enough. Vermont cannot continue to face annual transit funding crises that force difficult decisions and uncertainty for riders, providers, and communities. In addition to stabilizing funding this year, the state must commit to identifying new, long-term and sustainable revenue sources that ensure transit is treated as a reliable and permanent part of our transportation system - not an afterthought.

The Coalition appreciates the Committee's thoughtful consideration of the many serious issues facing our transportation system. We urge you to act now to stabilize transit funding, while laying the groundwork for long-term solutions that prevent this crisis from repeating.

Sincerely,

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